



For more information:
NDDOT Communications (701) 328-4441

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Officials celebrate rehabilitation of historic Sorlie Memorial Bridge in Grand Forks/East Grand Forks

Today, the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) was joined by and the Minnesota Department of Transportation along with city and county officials to commemorate the completion of a major rehabilitation project on the Sorlie Bridge that spans the Red River and connects the cities of Grand Forks, North Dakota to East Grand Forks, Minnesota.

The rehabilitation project was a collaborative effort between the NDDOT, Minnesota Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, City of Grand Forks and City of East Grand Forks. The \$4.6 million project included bridge rehabilitation, painting, modern lighting, pavement markings and other improvements. During the entire project, the bridge remained open to motorists.

"This project was noteworthy in the fact that we were able to rehabilitate this wonderful structure that dates back to 1929," said NDDOT Director, Grant Levi. "Although we continue to design and build many new projects, it's important for us to preserve history and still meet today's transportation needs." Each day about 14,000 vehicles travel over the Sorlie Bridge.

"This bridge has endured extreme flooding in its lifetime, including the flood of 1997," said Mayor Michael R. Brown of Grand Forks. "With this rehabilitation, we can be assured it will remain an enduring connection between our communities both literally and in spirit."

One of the most unique features of this project was the ability to restore a bridge that was originally built in 1929. The rehabilitation of the bridge also includes the addition of a new LED lighting system which has the capability to change the color of the lights displaying on the bridge which will be a welcome addition for downtown Grand Forks and East Grand Forks. A committee is being formed to help create a lighting plan to outline which colors will be used at different times throughout the year.

The Sorlie Memorial Bridge was originally built in 1929. The 604 ft. long Parker Through Truss Bridge was built to replace an old swing bridge over the Red River. It was named after former North Dakota Governor Arthur Gustav Sorlie, because of his advocacy for improvement to the state highway system.

Rehabilitation of the bridge was provided by Royal Bridge Incorporated and their sub-contractors.